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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Milosevic Death -
Sudan - Dubai Port Deal
PARIS - Monday, March 13, 2006

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Milosevic Death
Sudan
Dubai Port Deal

(B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

The electronic and print press over the weekend and today was largely devoted to Prime Minister Villepin's contested youth employment plan that sparked demonstrations and a sit-in at the Sorbonne University. French police forced the evacuation of the University building around 4 a.m. on Saturday morning. Popular right-of-center Aujourd'hui en France on Sunday headlined: "Villepin Alone Against Everybody." Calling the situation a "crisis," the subhead said: "the evacuation of hundreds of students who occupied the Sorbonne hasn't reduced the youths determination to oppose the CPE.

The death of dictator Slobodan Milosevic: "Deprives his Victims of Justice" according to the headline in Catholic La Croix.

Front pages of two Sunday papers, right-of-center Le Journal Du Dimanche ("Death of a Tyrant") and popular right-of-center Aujourd'hui en France ("Death of a War Criminal") announced Slobodan Milosevic's death in his cell at The Hague where he was on trial for genocide and crimes against humanity. Monday's right-of-center Le Figaro says that Milosevic's death: "disrupts the process of normalization in the Balkans." This death also casts doubts on the Tribunal that is devoted to trying Former Yugoslavian war criminals. Le Figaro notes "a lot of people die in the jails of this tribunal. and in Belgrade several dailies were calling Milosevic's death an assassination." (See Part C)

The inauguration of Chilean president Michelle Bachelet is widely reported in Monday's press with mention of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's presence representing the U.S. while Defense Minister Michele Alliot-Marie represented France at the inauguration. Monday's Liberation notes that Bolivian president Evo Morales, who met with Secretary of State Rice on the margins of the inauguration, presented her with a guitar decorated with coca leaves.

"Africans Call the UN into Darfur," says Sunday left-of-center Le Monde's front page, noting that three years have passed since the outbreak of civil war in Darfur, and the international community has not been able to pull the region out of looming catastrophe. The article notes that the U.S. has pressed for NATO troops to carry out the UN peacekeeping mission - a move that Sudanese leaders view as letting a Trojan horse from Washington on their soil. Gilles Delafon, a regular columnist in Le Journal du Dimanche, writes "This time, Africa seems to have decided to assume its responsibilities. After months of procrastination, the African Union has agreed to transfer control of its forces to the UN. He notes that: "It is obvious that France, present in the area with its military base in Chad, will have a major role to play, and also, more generally, so will Europe." (See Part C)

Sunday's Le Monde, in an article entitled, "Congressional Opposition Puts President Bush in a Delicate Position vis--vis his Arab Allies," quotes the Washington Post about the Dubai Ports World crisis. The Arab world got a clear message from the debate over this deal: "No matter how much your country cooperates with the U.S., Americans may still not be able to distinguish you from al-Qaeda." (See Part C)

Catholic La Croix carries a report on the two-day long conference in Istanbul on the Kurdish issue. Foreign affairs editorialist for La Croix Jean-Christophe Ploquin notes: "The situation in Iraq has given the Kurds the world over a formidable impetus. Thanks namely to the quasi-state that has been formed in the northern part of the country under the protection of the U.S. It has benefited from exceptional development. This new geopolitical reality is linked to the

American presence in Iraq. Instability could erupt again if the U.S. soldiers were to withdraw."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Milosevic Death

"Lesser Evil"

Gerard Dupuy writes in left-of-center Liberation (03/13): "The brutal demise of Milosevic marks the end of a life of violence. His death is a source of frustration for his critics and an inexhaustible source of paranoid theories for his supporters. In his day, Milosevic's reprehensible plans could be carried out because of the passivity of the Europeans and it was only the American military machine that was able to stop him."

"Milosevic's Death Without a Trial Poisons the Future of Serbia"

Foreign Affairs specialist for right-of-center Le Figaro Isabelle Lasserre comments (03/13): "Slobodan Milosevic's premature death may exacerbate Serbian nationalism and add weight to the supporters of Belgrade's revisionist theories. Unable to be tried, Milosevic will remain for his supporters a hero who tried to save the Serbs from their numerous enemies. Without a trial there can be no justice for the victims who in Croatia, Bosnia or Kosovo were subjected to the brutal repression of Milosevic's regime. A lot depends on how the funeral will be handled. If the former Serbian president is a given a funeral fit for a tsar, the nationalists will try to present Milosevic as yet another victim of the West."

Sudan

"The UN Finally Comes to the Rescue of Darfur"

Gilles Delafon in weekly right-of-center Le Journal du Dimanche (03/12): "The person who is responsible for the catastrophe is Sudanese president Omar al-Bachir. Up until recently he could count on the dubious indulgence of his peers. But pressure has continued to increase thanks namely to the U.S. and more particularly to President George Bush who has shown his determination not to have a repeat of what took place in Rwanda."

Dubai Port Deal

"The Republican Majority Distances Itself From a Weakened George W. Bush"

Economic right-of-center Les Echos' New York correspondent David Barroux (03/13): "In order to increase their chances of success during the mid-term elections, elected Democrat and Republican officials no longer hesitate to completely ignore the position of the President who is as unpopular as was Richard Nixon in his time. Bogged down in Iraq, George W. Bush no longer has any authority over his own troops, and he no longer appears able to set out an agenda of any kind."
STAPLETON